



NEWS RELEASE

RELEASE DATE: 16th October 2008

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**Embargoed until Thursday
16th October 2008 at 00:01hrs**

International experience gives graduates an edge for top global jobs

Global businesses are increasingly seeking graduates who have a global awareness. They value those who have the initiative to study overseas as part of their learning. Such study helps them be more culturally aware, more able to work in multicultural teams and more able to move around the world as part of their career. **But UK graduates are missing out** as they are now less likely to study overseas than they used to.

These are some of the messages from a new report launched today at the Royal Society by the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE).

Helping to launch the report, **Keith Dugdale, Director of Global Recruitment at KPMG** said:

“KPMG like many other UK firms recruits globally. We want the best wherever they may be. The UK develops some great talent. It attracts some of the best from around the world. We will recruit that talent but to remain competitive we want to see more UK graduates developing a global perspective through international experience. They will have to work with global clients and mix with a range of people from different cultures. They have to be at home with cultural differences.”

The report also reveals for the first time how international students feel about the benefits of studying at UK universities. The results are very encouraging. International graduates consider that they are more likely to have higher paid jobs at more senior positions and spent less time seeking those jobs either than UK graduates or those in their home country who did not travel to the UK. These findings reinforce the call from some US commentators that US students should consider studying in top UK universities as they offer great value for money in these turbulent times.

Commenting on these results, **Will Archer, Director of i-graduate** who undertook the survey of over 15,000 graduates, said:

“This research is a wake-up call for students and parents. You’ll get further in life if you travel overseas to study or gain work experience. In today’s turbulent times it is more important than ever for every graduate to demonstrate an international dimension to their thinking, and there is no better way to demonstrate this than to study or work for a period overseas. Our research also shows how important it is for universities to engage with former students and to understand where they are in their careers. Graduates of all ages can play a vital part in providing role models and careers connections for students... but only if their institution remains relevant and connected to them.”

Notes for Editors

CIHE is a high level partnership between leading people from a wide range of businesses, universities and colleges. The Council leads in developing an agreed agenda on the learning issues at higher education level that affect our international competitiveness, social cohesion and individual development.

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David Lammy MP, the Minister for Higher Education at DIUS said:

“It is good news that global business leaders recognise that the UK develops some of the best graduates in the world and want to recruit more from our universities. This further confirms the world class status of our higher education sector.

“I am also pleased that international graduates know that they get good value and great jobs following their study here. But these very welcome messages must be communicated more effectively to global businesses and to students thinking of coming here to study. We must also get the message to our own students that they need to take advantage of the various schemes available to study or take work placements overseas like our very successful China summer school scheme.”

UK based businesses are perhaps especially likely to seek a diverse range of graduates as they seem to be more global in the composition of their executive and non-executive teams. The report notes that gone are the days when British businesses sent an ex-pat to run their overseas operations. They now have global competency models and recruit globally for their global and local businesses. Some operations in Asia, for example, ask their UK colleagues to recruit from UK universities a quota of Asian graduates on the basis that those who have the drive and language skills to study in the UK are a self-identifying elite.

“The UK can be the preferred worldwide location for mobile students and global recruiters” said **Richard Brown the Chief Executive of the CIHE.**

“Businesses consider that the UK develops some of the best graduates in the world. But our home-grown ones need to get that wider global perspective. Universities can help them by developing more partnerships with overseas universities that involve more student and staff exchanges.”

The full report *Global Horizons and the role of businesses* is being launched at the CIHE annual conference at the Royal Society. The programme for the conference plus a list of other CIHE publications, submissions and work priorities can be accessed at www.cihe-uk.com

Notes for Editors

***i-graduate* and the International Alumni Barometer**

- *i-graduate* is an independent benchmarking and research service, delivering comparative insights for the education sector worldwide.
- Four in five of the world’s top universities use *i-graduate* to benchmark the student experience using the International Student Barometer.
- *i-graduate* have taken feedback from over 350,000 students from across five continents since 2005.
- Eleven UK universities participated in the benchmarked International Alumni Barometer 2008. In total, more than 15,000 UK alumni responded to the International Alumni Barometer, representing 132 different nationalities. The International Alumni Barometer offers insight into career progression, with quantitative data regarding employment status and history, salary and the types of organisations employing international alumni as well as qualitative insight into how graduates perceive their university experience.
- Universities who participated in the IAB 2008 include the University of Aberdeen, University of Bristol, Buckinghamshire New University, Cardiff University, Coventry University, University of Hertfordshire, Liverpool John Moores University, London South Bank University, Middlesex University, University College London and the University of Warwick.

Additional CIHE information

The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) celebrates its 50th Council meeting on the 11th November.